

REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1-4, 7, 9-11, 25-27 and 29-30 are considered in the Office action.

Claims 29, 30, 1, 2 and 9 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Seino et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,361,138 (“Seino”).

Claims 3, 10, 11, 25 and 26 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Seino in view of Haines et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,808,255 (“Haines”).

Claim 4 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Seino in view of Trafton et al. U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0043243 (“Trafton”).

Claims 7 and 27 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Haines in view of Yoshimura et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,019,461 (“Yoshimura”).

Reply

Applicants have amended claims 29 and 30 to more particularly recite and distinctly claim the invention. Amended claim 29 recites a printing system that includes a plurality of ink containers, each ink container including an ink and an associated tag, each tag including rewritable data that identifies the manufacturing date of the associated ink. Amended claim 30 recites a method for use with a printing system that comprises a plurality of ink containers, the method including providing a plurality of tags, uniquely associating each tag with a corresponding one of the containers, each tag including rewritable data that identifies the manufacturing date of the associated ink. None of the cited references, alone or combined, describe or suggest the claimed invention.

Indeed, Seino expressly points away from the claimed invention. Seino describes an inkjet apparatus that includes ink cartridges 1 and 2 that include rewritable storage systems 32 and 42, such as semiconductor memory. (Col. 2, lines 43-48; Col. 3, lines 22-29). Storage systems 32 and 42 store cartridge manufacturing date and expiration date as non-rewriteable, fixed data. (Col. 3, lines 30-34). Thus, unlike the claimed invention, Seino does not describe a printing system that includes ink containers that have tags with rewritable data that identifies the manufacturing date of

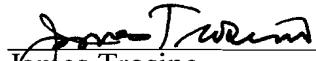
the ink in the container. Instead, Seino expressly points away from the claimed invention by using ink cartridges that have memory that stores manufacturing date data as non-rewritable data.

Because Seino does not describe the claimed invention, and in fact expressly points away from it, applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 29 and 30 are allowable. Further, because 1-4, 7, 9-11 depend from claim 29, and claims 25-27 depend from claim 30, applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-4, 7, 9-11 and 25-27 are also allowable.

Conclusion

For the reasons stated above, applicants submit that this application, including claims 1-4, 7, 9-11, 25-27 and 29-30, is allowable. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner allow this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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